



POLICY

TITLE:	Multiple Survival Surgeries
Policy Number:	2014-023
Responsible Department:	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
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Approval Date:	8/13/14
Reviewed:	7/12/17
Revised:	7/12/17 (added training in anesthesia, surgical and pain control procedures required)
Legislation:	Animal Welfare Act (Title 9 CFR Subchapter A, Part 2, Subpart C, § 2.31(d)(1)(x)(A) and (B))

Purpose of Policy: To prevent the performance of multiple surgical procedures that may cause an animal unnecessary pain or distress or adversely affect its overall well-being.

Policy Information: The [Animal Welfare Act](#) states that “No animal will be used in more than one major operative procedure from which it is allowed to recover, unless: (A) justified for scientific reasons by the principal investigator, in writing; (B) required as routine veterinary procedure or to protect the health or well-being of the animal as determined by the attending veterinarian.”

The Public Health Service’s [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#) states that “Multiple major surgical procedures on a single animal are acceptable only if they are (1) included in and essential components of a single research project or protocol, (2) scientifically justified by the investigator, or (3) necessary for clinical reasons. Conservation of scarce animal resources may justify the conduct of multiple major surgeries on a single animal, but the application of such a practice on a single animal used in separate protocols is discouraged and should be reviewed critically by the IACUC. When applicable (see below), the IO (institutional official) must submit a request to USDA/APHIS and receive approval in order to allow a regulated animal to undergo multiple major survival surgical procedures in separate unrelated research protocols. Justifications for allowing animals not regulated by the USDA to undergo multiple survival surgeries that meet the above criteria should conform to those required for regulated species. If multiple survival surgery is approved, the IACUC should pay particular attention to animal well-being through continuing evaluation of outcomes. **Cost savings alone is not an adequate reason for performing multiple major survival surgeries.** Some procedures characterized as minor may induce substantial post-procedural pain or impairment and should similarly be scientifically justified if performed more than once in a single animal.”

A request from the IO to the USDA Animal Care Regional Director is necessary only when a USDA-covered species must undergo more than one major survival surgery in separate unrelated research protocols. Investigators are referred to [USDA Policy No. 14](#) for further instructions concerning USDA-covered species.

Policy: Multiple survival surgeries on a single animal may be permitted only if they meet the criteria established above and are approved by the IACUC. The number of survival surgeries performed must be limited to the minimum number necessary to achieve the research objectives and must be determined with consideration for minimizing the pain and distress experienced by any one animal. Whenever possible, all operative procedures should be done at one time to minimize post-operative discomfort and distress to the animal. Cost or convenience is not an adequate justification for the conduct of multiple survival surgeries.

As for all surgeries, the person performing the surgery must be adequately trained in anesthesia, surgical and pain control procedures.

Emergency multiple surgeries may be done to correct complications due to previous surgical procedures or as part of the process of providing veterinary care; however, these must be done in consultation with the Attending Veterinarian. Euthanasia should be considered as a humane alternative to surgical repair in these cases if the animal is in poor health or suffering pain or distress that cannot be alleviated.